

Intended Predication

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Abstract

The basic argument of this article is that the predicate, in its profane sense, has a realistic ground. A discussion of realism in language analysis is made on the basis of a reconstruction of the paradigmatic functions intended in the Object component. By introducing the Subject component as the governing factor for analyzing predications, the author schematically demonstrates the "ecologically significant" double binding between the objects of the predicate.

Realism in Language

In linguistics, the notion object is characterized by a two-foldness. At times it is embedded in a thing perspective, while on occasion it encompasses an idea. Things exist in the environment or may be posited in space. These circumstances are related to syntactic positions. Ideas, on the other hand, are related to paradigmatic functions. This kind of function has in ancient times been expressed by the notion case.

The reconstruction of the origin of the Latin case names rests on the thing perspective (Jespersen, 1922; Bloomfield, 1933; Fillmore, 1968). The commonly accepted linguistic position is that the notion accusative has to be regarded as a mistranslation of the so called transferred sense of fault or blame in a Greek noun with the primary sense of cause. The meaning of the object as that which is effected could therefore be explained with its immediate position close to the verb, namely the verbal goal. Thus from the linguistic point of view, the expression (that which was spoken out loudly) could be associatively linked to the verb.

Things in the environment or in space can be manipulated by operations on positions. This is the root of an objectifying thinking about language that can be traced back to the Middle Ages and is still the predominant one in modern linguistics. The ideas about events and phenomena are thus represented by a cause - effect model, where causes of occurrences are explained with an if - then logic characteristic of an omen-like thinking (Jaynes, 1976). In ancient times the gods had been speaking. Only a partial paradigm could be expressed. On the other hand, when Socrates was condemned for impiety this event marks a time of upheaval, which brought to the fore a new turn in the development of consciousness, away from the verb - object association and towards the manifestation of self-reference in language. From the reference to a subjective "I" (know thyself) the full subject - verb - object paradigm could be derived. Consequently, the responsibility for one's own actions could be built into the language itself. The decisive point to be made is that from now on any individual could accuse

himself or others, and be accused by others. In this perspective, the notion accusative cannot simply be regarded as a mistranslation. Instead, it should be looked upon in terms of "causa", i.e. the objective case in the juridical sense.

If the realistic ground also of the notion dative is to be sought in classical environments, the modern concept is a misrepresentation. It is generally referred to giving (from Lat. dāre = give), which is a classification. The neuter noun "datum" (Lat. perf. part. pass.) means, simply, something given. For ancient people, all was given by the god(s), both the human nature and the one surrounding them. With the understanding that something given requires a giver, the humans could give in return, i.e. an offer. The use of the plural "datorum" with its sense of expenditure belongs to the profane world and is thus of a later date. As soon as the source of that which was given was no longer sought in the vertical dimension but horizontally, the dimensionality of the phenomenon became essentially more complicated. In a money transaction, it is of particular importance to be able to specify its point of origin, especially if it is connected with loan business within which the debts are to be repaid to the loan giver.

It seems to be clear that the Greeks and the Romans had a quite different view on everyday life than what we have today (Jaynes, 1976). Values in our sense were introduced with Christianity. In this way, the concept of debt became related to the offer (sacrifice) just like the money-gift spent (charity) would connect the giver with morality. An example of this conduct may be found in the German expression "Du bist mir ein Geizhals" (You are a miser to me) in which some "Dativus" has closed his money-bag to a pure man ("mir"). The point of transaction for a dative (giver) is someone who is ethically exposed. The development from that view to the semantic specification of the dative as +Animate seems consistent.

The significance of the Roman conceptualization of the objective case lies in the fact that the individual could be made

the subject of inspection, i.e. be objectified like property or other cases. This meant the set in of a cognitive transformation implying a conscious separation of a person from the idea represented. An accusation in the juridical sense, moreover, comprises the intention to keep separate the idea and the case. With this frame of reference, "Geizhals" represents the case which the speaker gets to govern his idea vis-à-vis the loan giver. The vocative form denotes that he places himself within the scope of the giver thus making pretence of being exposed. Evidently, the example indicates that a confusion is being made between the idea and the case of which the result is nothing else but an illusory accusation.

In linguistic representation, there may be noticed a tendency to conserve a partial idea about reality, one which is anchored in syntactic-positional thinking. The realistically based intentionality contained in language deserves to be detected anew. This is probably the only possible step to take if the natural properties of language shall be properly analysed. Based on these premises, an approach taken to the study of linguistically represented objects will now be presented.

The Object Component

The paradigmatic relationship to be discussed in this section is concerned with the principle of figure - ground cooperation in language the way it may be observed from the point of view of an agent. The theoretical background on a steering mechanism of the agent, i.e. the autonomous observer within the Agent - action - Objective paradigm (AaO), has been presented in B. Bierschenk (1984a; 1984b), I. Bierschenk (1984), and Bierschenk & Bierschenk (1984).

The Objective component of the AaO paradigm represents the field in which an agent operates. In order for the agent to function, there has to be some basis or ground onto which its operations can be reflected. Likewise, an operation puts the consciously existing formations and figures into view. The figure - ground

relationship in Gestalt psychology focuses on reversability. Since the present discussion concerns the cooperation between a figure and a ground, it deserves to be pointed out that this co-operation does not refer to some perceptual switch mechanism. What is referred to is the circumstance that a figure always pre-requires the existence of a ground, whereas a ground does not prerequisite the existence of a figure. This relationship is expressed in language (data observed from English, French, German, and Swedish) through a so called double binding (Bateson, 1979) by binding the figures to the grounds and by integrating the grounds into the figures. The mechanism rests on the pointing function of the prepositions.

Figure - Ground Cooperations

It is undoubtedly so that the Figure and Ground components have an "ecological significance" and that this circumstance thus binds any natural text to some field of reality. If the field is known in terms of its A and O relations, i.e. its scope (I. Bierschenk, 1984), the text may be used for demonstration.

For a study of figure-ground cooperations, a text has been used, which describes the well-known and renowned experiments in developmental psychology reported in Gibson & Walk (1960). The main aspects of this text are, briefly, the following:

A group of researchers was interested in the extent to which the meaning of depth could be shown to exist in infants of crawling age. The experimental device looked like a large table with the top made of glass. A patterned material was placed directly underneath the glass on one half and was lowered on to the floor on the other. This arrangement made the sides look shallow and deep respectively. The infants were placed on the glass surface, and by using their mothers to lure them to cross the table to either side, the researchers could observe the infants' operations on the table top.

The prerequisites of the experiment are expressed in the following linguistic observation:

The researchers observed the infants (1)
Figure
on the visual cliff
Ground

Without this specific ground the significant figure of the infants could not emerge for observation. The properties of the ground are given such that they shall elicit some formation in the figure. In

The patterned material gives the sense of depth (2)
Figure
to the one half of the glass surface
Ground

the intended integration of the ground is expressed. The following two examples from the text demonstrate a cognitive progression through behavioural operations:

Some infants crawled over the edge (3)
Ground

Others patted the glass but refused to cross (4)
Figure
the deep side
Figure

When solidity alone stands as the quality of the ground it elicits no other figuration than what can be observed by body movement. As soon as the tactile feeling can be coordinated with sight, however, the glass is figured and becomes integrated in the sense of depth. The existence of this figure could be observed in preferably non-motoric behavioural expressions demonstrating the consequence of the cooperation with the ground. Thus, the reason for the figuration was that

The infants were exposed to danger (5)
 Figure Ground

whether real or illusive.

Discussion

It is not an overstatement to say that the main concern of linguistic science has been and still is the predicate. To realize the consequences of this we need to look at the predicate as a phenomenon.

It would not be difficult to imagine the origination of the predicate in those times when the judgments were given from the gods and, for example, were conjured up by throwing dices in front of a public. The predication (Lat. *praedicāre*) was made the basis for decisions about something, as the allocation of allotments or positions of trust or leadership (cf. Germ. *Urteil* = *Erteilung*). That which the case concerned, a subject, was not in focus but was assigned afterwards that which was said about it.

If we allow ourselves to conceive of the predicate as a modifier of the subject in the sense that symbol formation of substances proceeds from the direction of the modifier and not the reverse (an idea which has been operationalized in Bierschenk & Bierschenk, 1976), even the full-blown predicate (transitive verb + object) would constitute the basis for the judgment. Thus by introducing an activity into the predication also a responsibility is incorporated into the analysis vis-à-vis the subject. Instead of assigning attributes to the subject as if it were just any object, it becomes intentionally operating, which necessarily has to incorporate a reason.

A linguistic analysis of the predicate rests on the position that reality-bound relationships between the subject and its actions are impossible to unambiguously express in the language as soon as it is a matter of naturally originating predications. Therefore, the classical position is maintained which places the subject on a par with the object. In agreement with the ambition

to objectify and to standardize different arguments on the classification of actions are being put forward.

The basic argument of this article is that the predicate in the profane sense has a realistic ground. If we accept that people of today have a higher degree of consciousness than our ancestors, it would be reasonable that we award them the ability and the means to express it. Moreover, if we recognize that some consciousness about reality is just what a language analysis should be capable of defining, the classificational approach seems obscure. The figure-ground analysis proposed here deliberates the analysis from moralizing elements. Finally, there is every reason to look constructively upon the dependency between the objects, since it can be shown that they behave algorithmically to each other.

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